Deadly Dreams

Opium, Imperialism, and the *Arrow* War (1856–1860) in China

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1

An attempt to peel the onion of confusion

I. The confusing events

It all began in 1856 with Thomas Kennedy, an Irishman from Belfast who nominally captained the Chinese crew of a lorcha called the *Arrow*. The lorcha had been built in China by a Chinese, owned by a Chinese, and sold to another Chinese. But to protect the ship from the Chinese authorities, a register had been obtained by paying the necessary fees to the British government in Hong Kong and Kennedy had been employed as the nominal captain.[1]

Why was British protection necessary? An old China hand offered some clues. These vessels, he said, were well known by both the Chinese government and foreigners to be manned by inveterate smugglers. Generally these ships were very heavily armed and had a most formidable looking appearance. 'Oftentimes the peaceful inhabitants in the little towns on the coast have complained bitterly to me of the lawless and tyrannical acts of their crews', he added. 'Are these crews to be allowed to commit all sorts of offences against their own government and people and then point to the flag of England . . . as their protection and as their warrant?' he asked.[2] In the case of the *Arrow*, it was subsequently proved that she had been engaged at least in receiving stolen goods.[3]

How could British protection be purchased in this way? Apparently in those days, a Chinese could go to Hong Kong and by means of some 'mystification',[4] such as becoming the tenant of Crown lands or becoming a partner with somebody who was, obtain a colonial register for his ship and get a Briton for a captain. What sort of a Briton was he? He was 'some loose fish, some

1. See Chapter 2.
2. Robert Fortune, *A Residence among the Chinese: Inland, On the Coast, and at Sea. Being a narrative of scenes and adventures during a third visit to China, from 1853–1856, including notices of many natural productions and works of art, the culture of silks, &c, with suggestions on the present war* (London, John Murray, 1857), pp. 425–6.
3. See Chapter 2.
4. Cobden, 26 February 1857, Hansard, 3d series, v. 144, col. 1400. See next note.

stray person, or runaway apprentice, or idle young seaman'.[5] He had plenty of grog to drink and nothing else to do because he was not expected to take part in the working of the ship.[6] His sole value lay in his being British. Like a scarecrow, his only function was to scare off the Chinese maritime police.[7]

Nonetheless this Chinese crew was arrested on 8 October 1856, when the *Arrow* was anchored at Canton and Kennedy was away breakfasting with his fellow captains of convenience. An angry British acting consul, Harry Parkes,[8] arrived to claim the Chinese sailors, but soon came to blows with the Chinese officers. In the heat of the moment, there were loud protests about an alleged insult to the British flag.

Parkes later claimed that Kennedy was onboard the *Arrow* when the flag was allegedly pulled down, even though Kennedy himself testified that he was not.[9] Parkes also tried to put words in the mouth of his superior, the British minister plenipotentiary, Sir John Bowring,[10] in order to authorize his own demands, which he had already made to the Chinese.[11] When it was discovered that the *Arrow*'s register had in fact expired, Bowring conspired with Parkes not to tell the Chinese.[12] He even pretended to the Chinese authorities that the register was still valid.[13] And he foolishly informed Whitehall, enclosing the pertinent correspondence. He ought to have known that this was bound to embarrass the government; an annoyed secretary of state for foreign affairs instructed him to send duplicates only of despatches of great political interest.[14] But the damage was done; Bowring's correspondence created an uproar in both houses of Parliament.[15]

5. These were the observations of a Mr Cook. He was the U.S. marshal at Whampoa, which was a few miles downstream from Canton. His duty was to regulate the use of the Stars and Stripes. He told Richard Cobden his observations after four years in that position. See ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Apart from the so-called yamen runners, there was not a formal civilian police force in China as we know it today. What we may describe as police duties nowadays were assumed by an army called the Green Standard. There was another army in China at that time, the Eight Banners, which had no police duties.
8. Harry Smith Parkes (1828–85) was to be appointed one of the three European commissioners to rule Canton after that city had fallen during the *Arrow* War. He was to become British consul at Shanghāi in 1864, minister to Japan in 1865, and minister to China in 1883. See Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Life of Sir Harry Parkes*, 2 vs. (London, Macmillan, 1894).
9. See Chapter 2.
10. Sir John Bowring (1792–1872) was a distinguished linguist, writer, and traveller. In 1849 he was appointed consul at Canton and, in 1854, plenipotentiary in China. In May 1859, he resigned his office and returned to England. See his *Autobiographical Recollections of Sir John Bowring* (London, H. S. King, 1877).
11. See Chapter 3.
12. Bowring to Parkes, 11 October 1856, Parl. Papers 1857, v. 12, pp. 64–5, para. 4.
13. Bowring to Yeh, 14 November 1856, ibid., pp. 143–4, para. 2.
14. Clarendon to Bowring, Desp. 248 (draft), 10 December 1856, FO17/243.
15. See Chapters 8–9.

Bowring also conspired with Parkes to get Rear-Admiral Sir Michael Seymour[16] to open hostilities against the Chinese. To this end, they never told the admiral that the register of the *Arrow* had in fact expired and that the ship was no longer entitled to British protection. This legal anomaly was subsequently detected by the earl of Malmesbury.[17] But there were other skeletons in the closet which the plenipotentiary and the consul necessarily concealed from the admiral, and which subsequently remained hidden despite the vigorous scrutiny by Parliament.[18]

The admiral, who had lost an eye in the recent Crimean War,[19] could see only one way to negotiate – by bombarding Canton City. The civilian casualties[20] caused an uproar in Parliament and the government lost the debate. Parliament was dissolved, an election was called. The government was returned to office, by which time large contingents of troops had been sent to China. Halfway through the war, the government lost office again. The former opposition came to power, and in a volte-face, pursued the war with renewed vigour.[21]

The Chinese officials at Canton were no better behaved. It will be seen that the British demand to enter the walled city of Canton was one of the origins of the war, because the British used the *Arrow* incident as an excuse to satisfy this exaction. Indeed, the British had made such a claim as early as 1843.[22] They repeated it year after year and finally managed, in 1847,[23] to extract a promise from the Cantonese authorities that they would be allowed entry two years thence.[24] When the time came, senior officials at Canton fabricated a 'false edict' to avoid honouring the obligation. At least they had the sense to tell the emperor[25] beforehand that they were going to issue a decree in his name. It is doubtful, however, if this precaution would have made any difference had the

16. Michael Seymour (1802–87) had served in the Mediterranean and South American stations and was promoted to rear-admiral in 1854. In the spring of 1856 he went out overland to take command of the China station. He was to be promoted vice-admiral in 1860, and admiral in 1864. From March 1863 to March 1866 he was to be commander-in-chief at Portsmouth. *Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter cited as *DNB*) (Oxford: since 1917), v. 17, pp. 1264–5.
17. Malmesbury, 26 February 1857, Hansard, 3d series, v. 144, col. 1345.
18. See Chapter 4.
19. This happened while he was examining one of the small sea mines, which had been picked up off Cronstadt and which exploded, wounding him in the face and destroying the sight of one eye. *DNB*, v. 17, p. 1265.
20. What with the bombardment of, and deliberately setting fire to, a densely populated city, a local Chinese official estimated that several thousand houses were destroyed and that many people were killed. See Hua Tingjie, 'Chufan zhimo' (An account of contacts with foreigners), collected in Chinese Historical Society (comp.), *Di'erci yapian zhanzheng* (The Second Opium War) (hereafter cited as *Ey ya*), 6 vs. (Shanghai, Renmin chubanshe, 1978), v. 1, p. 170. For more details, see Part Three, this volume.
21. See Chapter 18. 22. Qiying to Pottinger, 9 July 1843, FO682/1976/92, encl. 2.
23. See Wong, *Anglo-Chinese Relations*, pp. 341–2.
24. Davis to Palmerston, Desp. 53, 5 April 1847, FO17/125.
25. He was Emperor Daoguang, who reigned 1821–50.

plot failed. But it succeeded, and the British plenipotentiary, Sir George Bonham,[26] was fooled. So have been a large number of historians.[27]

In a dramatic reversal the emperor, even before he heard that the plot had worked, took back what he had said about letting the British into Canton City for a look around, and endorsed the forgery.[28] The man who penned the 'false edict', Commissioner Xu,[29] transcribed it in his autobiography as if it were genuine. His account is included in a famous collection of materials on the *Arrow* War.[30] His collaborator, Commissioner Yeh,[31] did the same. In a subsequent memorial to the next emperor,[32] he treated the 'false edict' as if it had been true. This memorial has been included in an equally authoritative collection of primary sources.[33] Small wonder that the Chinese have always been dazzled by this unthinkable victory.

As a result of the *Arrow* incident, the British bombarded Canton. On 29 October 1856 they made a hole in the city wall and so achieved entry. Thereupon, 'the American flag was this day borne on the walls of Canton'.[34] What had happened? The U.S. consul at Hong Kong, James Keenan,[35] followed the blue-jackets into the breach, 'accompanied by a sailor from one of the U.S.

26. Samuel George Bonham (1803–63) worked for the East India Company until 1837, when he was appointed governor of Prince of Wales's Island, Singapore, and Malacca. For ten years he held this post, until in 1847 he was appointed governor of Hong Kong and plenipotentiary in China. On his return to England in 1853, a baronetcy was conferred upon him. From this time he ceased to take any part in public affairs. *DNB*, v. 2, p. 807.
27. See Chapter 4.
28. Ibid.
29. Xu Guangjin (?–c. 1858) became imperial commissioner for foreign affairs and concurrently governor-general of Guangdong and Guangxi in 1848. In 1852 he was ordered to suppress the Taiping Rebellion and thereupon was transferred to the position of governor-general of Hunan and Hubei. See *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644–1912)*, ed. Arthur W. Hummel (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943–4), pp. 319–20. See also *Qingshi liezhuan* (Biographies of Qing history) (hereafter cited as *QSLZ*), ed. Zhonghua shuji (Shanghai, 1928), *juan* 48, pp. 10a–15b.
30. Xu Guangjin, 'Sibuzhai ziding nianpu' (Autobiography of Xu Guangjin), in *Er ya*, v. 1, pp. 149–62: p. 154.
31. His full name, in pinyin, is Ye Mingchen (1809–59). He became governor of Guangdong in 1847 and imperial commissioner for foreign affairs and concurrently governor-general of Guangdong and Guangxi in 1852. He was to be captured by the British during the *Arrow* War and exiled to India, where he starved himself to death. See my *Yeh Ming-ch'en*.
32. He was Emperor Xianfeng, who reigned 1851–61.
33. *Chouban yiwu shimo* (An account of the management of foreign affairs) (hereafter cited as *YWSM* (XF)), Xianfeng period (Beijing, Zhonghua shuju, 1979), no. 679, in *juan* 17, v. 2, pp. 610–20: p. 613. This edition provides Gregorian calendar dates for the documents, and is here used in preference to the original edition, which provided only the lunar calendar dates. To enable users of the original edition to identify the documents, the *juan* number is supplied. A similar edition for the Daoguang period of the *Yiwu shimo* is not available to me, and I have therefore continued to use the original edition.
34. Notification by Commander Foote of the United States Navy, 29 October 1856, Parl. Papers 1857, v. 12, pp. 100–1.
35. See Tong Te-kong, *United States Diplomacy in China, 1844–1860* (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1964), p. 186. The U.S. consul at Canton was Oliver H. Perry.

ships-of-war, carrying an American ensign'.[36] This act led one distinguished historian, Wei Jianyou, to conclude that the United States joined the British government in waging the war against China.[37] But before the day had elapsed, a public notice was issued by the commanding officer of the U.S. naval forces at Canton, disavowing the act as unauthorized and stating that it must not be regarded as compromising in the least degree the neutrality of his country.[38] Who was correct, the consul or the commander?

As Anglo-Chinese hostilities escalated, the U.S. naval, consular, and business communities decided to evacuate Canton on the advice of Commissioner Yeh.[39] Accordingly, they embarked on 15 November 1856.[40] But on this very day, the Chinese soldiers guarding the barrier forts fired on an U.S. warship. Commodore James Armstrong felt that the U.S. flag had been insulted. He sent his flagship there the next day and had the forts destroyed.[41] This incident reinforced the interpretation of U.S. intentions by Professor Wei, who commented that the Americans 'even used a small misunderstanding to despatch three men-of-war to attack and destroy five forts in the Barrier group of forts'.[42] On the basis of this comment, a group of China's officially chosen historians has accused the Americans of having done their utmost to assist the British imperialists attacking China[43] and of being full partners of the British in the assault on Canton.[44] At a time when the Americans were already leaving the Britons at Canton to fend for themselves, it is intriguing that an incident which completely nullified Commissioner Yeh's diplomatic coup should have occurred. Was it an accident or another conspiracy?

The French followed the example of the Americans and left Canton five days after them.[45] But later, the French joined the British as full partners of the war. What changed their minds? The Russians did not feature at all in these early conflicts. A year later, however, a Russian mission followed the Anglo-French march on Beijing. What business had the Russians to be there?

Commissioner Yeh told the emperor that in a single engagement his troops had wiped out four hundred blue-jackets, among them Admiral Seymour! This

36. Parkes to Bowring, 31 October 1856, Parl. Papers 1857, v. 12, p. 100.
37. Wei Jianyou, *Di'erci yapian zhanzheng* (The Second Opium War) (Shanghai, Renmin chubanshe, 1955), p. 49.
38. Notification by Commander Foote of the United States Navy, 29 October 1856, Parl. Papers 1857, v. 12, pp. 100–1.
39. Yeh to Perry, 10 November 1856, U.S. Senate Executive Documents, no. 22, 35th Congress, 2d Session, 'Peter Parker Correspondence', pp. 1027–8, cited in Tong, *United States Diplomacy in China*, pp. 185–6.
40. Tong, *United States Diplomacy in China*, p. 186.
41. Ibid., pp. 186–7.
42. Wei Jianyou, *Di'erci yapian zhanzheng*, p. 49.
43. *Di'erci yapian zhanzheng* (The Second Opium War), written by a collection of anonymous officially chosen historians (Shanghai, Renmin chubanshe, 1972), p. 15.
44. Ibid., pp. 15–16.
45. Tong, *United States Diplomacy in China*, p. 186.

feat was supposedly achieved on 6 November 1856.[46] British records, however, show that Seymour's report for that day says that the Royal Navy destroyed a fleet of Chinese war junks and captured the French Folly Fort with the loss of only one man, while Seymour himself watched the engagement from the Dutch Folly which the Royal Navy had previously captured.[47] If Yeh 'cried wolf' on this occasion, one wonders if he 'cried ghost' some fifteen months later, while he was prisoner on board HMS *Inflexible* and Seymour came to pay his respects![48]

II. The bewildering issues

But what lay behind all this? Where may we find the origins of the *Arrow* War? The chief antagonist of the British, Commissioner Yeh, has always been depicted by the British as a monster, as if the war were entirely his responsibility. The British prime minister, Lord Palmerston,[49] for instance, called him 'one of the most savage barbarians that ever disgraced a nation. He has been guilty of every crime which can disgrace and debase human nature'.[50] A sketch[51] of him by a British artist reinforces this impression. But some British journalists who went to see him concluded that the artist must have eaten raw beefsteaks and raw onions to conjure up such hideous fantasies.[52] While this eyewitness account was never read outside Hong Kong and was quickly forgotten, the artist's sketch has been printed and reprinted in nearly all the pertinent books,[53] perpetuating the notion that Yeh was a monster, in whose 'perverse discourtesy' and 'mulish pertinacity'[54] may be found the origins of the *Arrow* War. 'To yield to a savage of this kind were to imperil all our interests,

46. Imperial edict, 14 December 1856, incorporating Yeh's memorial, *YWSM* (XF), no. 547, in *juan* 14, v. 2, pp. 499–500.
47. Seymour to Admiralty, 14 November 1856, Parl. Papers 1857, v. 12, pp. 94–100, para. 12.
48. *Hong Kong Register* (newspaper clipping), 16 February 1858, Ryl. Eng. MSS 1230/84.
49. He was Henry John Temple (1784–1865), Third Viscount Palmerston, G. C. B., K. G. He had been secretary at war (1809–28) and secretary of state for foreign affairs (1830–4, 1835–41, and 1846–51). He became prime minister in March 1855, a position he was to hold till March 1858, and again from 1859 to 1865. He sat for Tiverton from June 1835 until his death on 18 October 1865. See Lloyd C. Sanders, *Life of Viscount Palmerston* (London, W. H. Allen, 1888); Kingsley Martin, *The Triumph of Lord Palmerston: A Study of Public Opinion in England Before the Crimea War* (revised edition, London, Hutchinson, 1963); Jasper Ridley, *Lord Palmerston* (London, Constable, 1970); and E. D. Steele, *Palmerston and Liberalism, 1855–1865* (Cambridge University Press, 1991).
50. Palmerston, 3 March 1857, Hansard, 3d series, v. 144, col. 1830.
51. The sketch was made after Yeh had been captured and was kept on board HMS *Inflexible*. See next two notes.
52. *Hong Kong Register* (newspaper clipping), 16 February 1858, Ryl. Eng. MSS 1230/84.
53. The sketch was first published in G. W. Cooke's *China: Being 'The Times' Special Correspondence from China in the Years 1857–8, with Corrections and Additions* (London, G. Routledge, 1858). For subsequent reproductions, see, e.g., Hurd, *Arrow War*, opposite p. 33.
54. *Morning Post*, 2 January 1857.

not only in the East, but in every part of the world', claimed a British newspaper.[55] But is this notion of Yeh's responsibility as untrue as the sketch?

Perhaps Yeh was not a monster, some have argued, but he was a xenophobe – his policy was to encourage popular xenophobia and therein we may find the origins of the *Arrow* War. Or may we?[56] At least one historian thinks so, alleging that Yeh was 'responsible for provoking the "second" (1856–60) Opium War'.[57]

What about British xenophobia, especially the xenophobia exhibited by Britons living far away from home and feeling isolated? To date, Western historians have been accusing the Chinese of xenophobia, and Chinese historians have been preoccupied with answering such charges. Few seem to have turned the question the other way round, paying little attention to what the eminent jurist of international law, Lord Lyndhurst,[58] had to say. His Lordship believed that Bowring was responsible for starting the war. After the crew of the *Arrow* was returned, a junk seized, and a few forts battered down, Bowring should have paused to reflect on the consequences of his actions. 'It is extraordinary that Sir John Bowring should think he had the power of declaring war', said Lord Lyndhurst, and 'to carry on offensive operations upon such a ground, upon such a pretence, is one of the most extraordinary proceedings to be found in the history of the world'.[59] If the proceedings were extraordinary, Bowring must have had his own extraordinary reasons.

The ground upon which Bowring carried on the war was the *Arrow* incident, in which Consul Parkes claimed the Union Jack had been hauled down. The British nautical practice was that a ship, when anchored, did not fly the national colours.[60] The incident occurred when the ship was at anchor and had been so for many days. Therefore its flag would not normally have been flying. Furthermore, crews of British-registered lorchas took pains to preserve the foreign appearance of their vessels by meticulously observing British nautical

55. Ibid., 3 February 1857.
56. This issue will be explored in Chapter 4.
57. James Polachek, *The Inner Opium War* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, 1992), p. 5.
58. He was John Singleton Copley the younger (1772–1863). He became solicitor-general in 1819, attorney-general in 1824, and Baron Lyndhurst and lord chancellor in 1827, the latter position he was to occupy in three ministries. He was said to have spoken rarely and only on great occasions, as well as to have had a 'marvellous power of digesting masses of evidence, reducing them into order, and retaining them in his memory'. As late as 1851, Lord Derby was anxious that he become lord chancellor for the fourth time, but he declined partly because, it is said, 'he was at an age, and had long been of a temper which prefers to speak on public questions unfettered by the ties of party'. Nonetheless he was present in the House of Lords at all important debates. *DNB*, v. 4, pp. 1107–14.
59. Lyndhurst, 24 February 1857, Hansard, 3d series, v. 144, cols. 1217–18. Sir James Graham expressed the same view. See Graham, 27 February 1857, ibid., col. 1561.
60. W. C. Costin, *Great Britain and China, 1883–1860* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1937), p. 207.

practice – Commissioner Yeh knew as much.[61] If the flag had not been hauled down, how do we resolve the issue of an alleged insult to it?

In terms of actual management of the incident, why did Parkes continue to escalate his demands? His superior, Bowring, allowed himself to be led by the nose. Why? Rear-Admiral Seymour, without sanction, readily consented to Bowring's request for military action, so readily that even Bowring was surprised.[62] Why? Successive foreign secretaries had issued the strictest injunctions to Bowring against renewing demands to enter the walled city of Canton. By using the *Arrow* incident to renew this unrelated demand, Bowring clearly contravened his instructions. Surprisingly, the foreign secretary, Lord Clarendon,[63] swallowed his own words and approved[64] Bowring's actions retrospectively. If Clarendon had good reasons for doing so, what were they?

Then something quite spectacular happened. On 6 January 1857, the British government published the report by Admiral Seymour on his naval operations on the Canton River, together with all relevant correspondence.[65] Not only documents but the private correspondence of consular officials had to observe the strictest precautions, to prevent leaks. For example, Bowring was censured for apparently having signified his permission to his secretary for Chinese affairs, Thomas Wade, 'to correspond with his friends in England on the state of affairs in China'. Sternly, Clarendon reminded Bowring of the eighth paragraph of the General Consular Instructions: 'The Consul will not on any account correspond with private persons on public affairs'.[66] Why then, should Her Majesty's government communicate to the general public information of a military nature?

Several weeks before, on 14 December 1856, a mysterious fire burnt down the foreign factories at Canton, destroying property (mainly U.S. and French) amounting to millions of dollars. At the time the factories were guarded by British forces. Who could have started the fire and for what purpose?[67]

Since 1949, mainland Chinese historians have insisted on calling the *Arrow* War the Second Opium War. Was opium ever an issue in the *Arrow* War? To date, Western historians almost unanimously deny it. Indeed, some of them

61. Yeh to Parkes, 24 October 1856, Parl. Papers 1857, v. 12, p. 89; cf. Yeh to Seymour, 31 October 1856, ibid., p. 103.
62. See Chapter 3.
63. He was George William Frederick Villiers (1800–70), fourth earl of Clarendon and Fourth Baron Hyde. He had been foreign secretary since 1853. He was said to be especially the guardian of peace and civilization, rather cosmopolitan than patriotic, and personally was very disinterested. See Herbert Maxwell, *The Life and Letters of George William Frederick, Fourth Earl of Clarendon*, 2 vs. (London, Edward Arnold, 1913).
64. Clarendon to Bowring, 10 December 1856, Parl. Papers 1857, v. 12, pp. 69–70; and Clarendon to Bowring, 10 January 1856, ibid., p. 157.
65. Foreign Office draft circular to H.M. Representatives abroad, 7 January 1857, FO17/261.
66. Clarendon to Bowring, Draft 64, 6 March 1857, FO17/261.
67. See Chapter 11 for a possible explanation.

have even denied that opium had any role in the (first) Opium War, and have thereby argued that such a title is unwarranted.[68] If the first conflict might not be called the Opium War, then of course the second might not be called the Second Opium War. Even the Chinese authors cannot pinpoint the place of opium in the *Arrow* War. Why, then, call it the Second Opium War? Opium remained contraband in China at this time. Therefore, what were the legal, moral, and financial issues involved, if any?

The Americans invariably sided with the British in their diplomatic manoeuvres against China. What was their stake? At this time, they were the second largest buyer of tea from China, second only to the British. How did they pay for that tea? They do not seem to have sold sufficient quantities of commodities to China to balance an apparent trade deficit.[69]

As for the Chinese themselves, they believe that the British waged the war to 'conquer, enslave, plunder, and slaughter'[70] their ancestors. No doubt such a description might be suitably applied to the Mongol conquest of China in the fourteenth century. But were the British the same?

These are emotive issues to the Chinese, due to an intense resentment against the outcome of the Opium War, by which the island of Hong Kong was ceded, and of the *Arrow* War, whereby the peninsula of Kowloon was given up. The Chinese position that neither the island nor the peninsula was so ceded, despite the pertinent treaties, has perplexed many commentators. This I attribute to different perceptions of the law. The Chinese have always insisted that treaties signed under duress are not valid, a moral argument which in turn has vexed Western historians.

Equally emotive to the British was an attempt, made on 15 January 1857, to poison the European community in Hong Kong by mixing arsenic with the bread. The overdose caused immediate vomiting, so no lives were lost. The *Morning Post* in London exploded: 'Talk of international law with sanguinary savages such as these! There is but one law for such demons in human shape, and that is a law of severe, summary and inexorable justice'.[71] Who ordered and who carried out the poisoning? The *Morning Post* alleged that Yeh gave out the orders; if so, one would have expected references to it, either in Yeh's memorials to the throne or in his archives (which the British subsequently

68. See, e.g., A. J. Sargent, *Anglo-Chinese Commerce and Diplomacy* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1907); Peter Ward Fay, *The Opium War, 1840–1842* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1975); and Frank Welsh, *A History of Hong Kong* (London, HarperCollins, 1993).
69. See H. B. Morse, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, 3 vs. (Shanghai, Kelly & Walsh, 1910–18).
70. These words seem to be a direct quotation from the Chinese version of the 'Communist Manifesto' by Marx and Engels. See Wang Di, 'Minzu de zainan yu minzu de fazhan' (The nation's catastrophe and the nation's development) in *Quru yu kangzheng* (Humiliation and resistance) (Beijing, Social Science Press, 1990), p. 36. This is a collection of conference papers published to mark the 150th anniversary of the Opium War.
71. *Morning Post*, 3 March 1857.

captured in his office). But there are no such references. Parkes alleged that it was Yeh's reward of $30 per British head that prompted it;[72] but the poisoner(s) would not be able to claim the reward because there was no way of coming forward with severed heads to be counted. The real issue is: What drove the poisoners to take such action?

III. Current scholarship

Ably, Douglas Hurd has told the British side of the story of the *Arrow* War, leaving the perplexing issues alone. So has Charles Leavenworth in *The Arrow War with China*, a book fit for the eyes of the old China hands.[73] Other authors have also targeted the war in their scholarly pursuits, and some have extended their studies to cover the decades immediately before the war. The pertinent monographs include W. C. Costin's *Great Britain and China, 1833–1860*, Gerald S. Graham's *The China Station: War and Diplomacy, 1830–1860*,[74] Frederic Wakeman Jr.'s *Strangers at the Gate: Social Disorder in South China, 1836–1861*,[75] Henri Cordier's *L'expedition de Chine de 1857–1858: Histoire diplomatique. Notes et document*,[76] Karl Marx's *Marx on China: Articles from the 'New York Daily Tribune', 1853–1860*,[77] Rosemary Quested's *The Expansion of Russia in East Asia, 1857–1860*,[78] S. I. Zaretskaya's *China's Foreign Policy in 1856–1860: Relations with Great Britain and France*,[79] Earl Swisher's *China's Management of the American Barbarians: A Study of Sino-American Relations, 1841–1861, with Documents*,[80] Edward V. Gulick's *Peter Parker and the Opening of China*,[81] Tong Te-kong's *United States Diplomacy in China, 1844–60*,[82] Robert Johnson's *Far China Station: The U.S. Navy in Asian Waters, 1800–1898*,[83] Eldon Griffin's *Clippers and Consuls: American Consular and Commercial Relations with Eastern Asia, 1845–1860*,[84] Jack Beeching's *The Chinese Opium Wars*,[85] David E. Owen's *British Opium Policy in China and India*,[86] my own

72. Parkes to Bowring, 6 December 1856, Parl. Papers 1857, v. 12, pp. 185–6, para. 3. See also Yeh's public proclamation, 28 October 1856, Parl. Papers 1857, v. 12, p. 94.
73. London, Low, Marston & Co., 1901.
74. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1978.
75. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1966.
76. Paris, 1905.
77. London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1968 (with an introduction and notes by Dona Torr). Even before the appearance of this annotated English edition, Beijing had published a Chinese edition in 1950 entitled *Makesi Engesi lun Zhongguo* (Renmin chubanshe).
78. Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya Press, 1968.
79. Moscow, Nauka, 1976.
80. New Haven, Conn., Yale University Far Eastern Publications, 1951.
81. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1973.
82. Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1964.
83. Bethesda, Md., Naval Institute Press, 1979.
84. Ann Arbor, Mich., Edwards Brothers, 1938.
85. London, Hutchinson, 1975.
86. New Haven, Conn., Yale University Press, 1934; Archon reprint, 1968.